AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently Amended) A double-deck elevator comprising:

an upper cage and a lower cage for accommodating passengers and vertically movable together in a hoistway provided in a building; and

covers positioned so as to cover ~~for covering~~ a space between the upper cage and the lower cage at a doorside, two lateral sides, and a backside of the space,

wherein ~~outer surfaces of said covers and outer surfaces of the upper cage and the lower cage are connected to each other without a difference in level between the surfaces~~ the covers and the cages are connected such that, at the point of connection, the outer surfaces of the covers and the cages are in the same plane.

37. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 36, wherein

a doorside cover which covers the space at the doorside of the space has a first portion extending downwardly from an end of an upper cage sill along a doorside inner wall of the hoistway, a second portion extending from a lower end of the first portion and curving into said space, and a third portion extending from a lower end of the second portion to a doorside end of a ceiling of the lower cage.

38. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 37, further comprising a catching plate for catching objects dropped through a clearance between the doorside inner wall of the hoistway and the upper cage sill, wherein

said catching plate is capable of swinging about a horizontal axis between a first position in which a distal end thereof contacts the doorside inner wall of the hoistway and a second position in which the distal end retracts from the doorside inner wall, and

said catching plate is disposed to open and close an opening provided at the second portion of the doorside cover.

39. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 38, wherein

said horizontal axis is disposed in the space at the inner side of the third portion of the doorside cover.

40. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 38, wherein

said catching plate in the second position and the doorside cover guide an air flow flowing along the doorside cover.

41. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 36, wherein

said upper cage and lower cage are supported on a cage frame by means of vibroisolating rubbers, and

at least one end of the covers for covering the space is connected to at least one of the upper cage and the lower cage by means of an elastic member for absorbing a distance change between the upper cage and the lower cage caused by elastic deformation of the vibroisolating rubbers.

42. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 36, wherein said covers are provided with a plurality of vertically extending protrusions on outer surfaces thereof for guiding a vertical airflow flowing along the outer surfaces thereof, respectively.

43. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 42, further comprising:

an upper airflow guiding member arranged above the upper cage for guiding an airflow into clearances between inner walls of the hoistway and outer side surfaces of the upper cage;

a lower airflow guiding member arranged below the lower cage for guiding an airflow into clearances between inner walls of the hoistway and outer side surfaces of the lower cage; and

said upper and lower airflow guiding members being formed in a form of a capsule, respectively.

44. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 43, further comprising noise absorbing members attached to at least one of the inner surfaces of the covers and the upper and lower airflow guiding members.

45. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 43, further comprising:

an upper airflow guiding cone arranged on the upper air flow guiding member for guiding an airflow to the outer surfaces of the upper airflow guiding member; and

a lower airflow guiding cone arranged below the lower airflow guiding member for guiding an airflow to the outer surfaces of the lower airflow guiding member.

46. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 43, wherein said upper and lower airflow guiding members are provided with uneven serrations on the outer surfaces thereof respectively.

47. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 37, wherein said covers are provided with a plurality of vertically extending protrusions on outer surfaces thereof for guiding a vertical airflow flowing along the outer surfaces thereof, respectively.

48. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 47, further comprising:

an upper airflow guiding member arranged above the upper cage for guiding an airflow into clearances between inner walls of the hoistway and outer side surfaces of the upper cage;

a lower airflow guiding member arranged below the lower cage for guiding an airflow into clearances between inner walls of the hoistway and outer side surfaces of the lower cage; and

said upper and lower airflow guiding members being formed in a form of a capsule, respectively.

49. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 48, further comprising noise absorbing members attached to at least one of the inner surfaces of the covers and the upper and lower airflow guiding members.

50. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 48, further comprising:

an upper airflow guiding cone arranged on the upper air flow guiding member for guiding an airflow to the outer surfaces of the upper airflow guiding member; and

a lower airflow guiding cone arranged below the lower airflow guiding member for guiding an airflow to the outer surfaces of the lower airflow guiding member.

51. (Previously Presented) The double-deck elevator according to claim 48, wherein said upper and lower airflow guiding members are provided with uneven serrations on the outer surfaces thereof respectively.